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# **PREPARING A COMMUNICATIONS PLAN**



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# Project Management Business Process

## Communications Plans Requirements

- 1) Define issues that do or may impact the project.
- 2) Identify key stakeholders and constituents.
- 3) Identify their interests.
- 4) Develop key messages.
- 5) Develop public involvement plan to inform and initiate action.
- 6) Develop a media strategy.
- 7) Evaluate and update regularly.



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# PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT IN THE PLANNING PROCESS

Planning Step	Information <b>TO</b>	Information <b>FROM</b>
<b>1. ID problems &amp; opportunities</b>		
<b>2. Inventory &amp; forecast</b>		
<b>3. Formulate alternative plans</b>		
<b>4. Evaluate alternatives</b>		
<b>5. Compare alternatives</b>		
<b>6. Select plan</b>		



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# PROCESS DESIGN

**Identify the steps in the decision making process, and the schedule for completion**



**Link issues and stakeholders to the decision process**



**Analyze the exchange of information that should take place at each step in the planning process**



**Identify appropriate involvement techniques to meet the planning step objectives**



**Develop a plan integrating the techniques**



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# CLARIFYING THE DECISION BEING MADE

What method is appropriate  
for isolating people from  
flooding?

What kind of structure  
should be built?

Where should  
the structure  
be located?



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# BUDGETING FOR PUBLIC INVOLVEMENT

- Must be part of original study budget or it will always get short-changed
- Like planning, public involvement budgets are built-up, rather than starting with a dollar figure then designing the program to match it
- Worksheets for each public involvement technique are provided



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# DECISION CONSTRAINTS AND SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCES

- Management or sponsor pre-commitment to an outcome
- Conducting polls & surveys
- Constraints on release of information, (i.e. proprietary rights)



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# CONDUCTING POLLS & SURVEYS WITH FEDERAL MONEY

- Paperwork Reduction Act - designed to protect the public from intrusive questioning
- If formal poll, survey, or questionnaire is used, must obtain prior approval from OMB and HQ.
- Allow a couple of months





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# OMB REVIEW

- Ensure questions aren't intrusive
- Good research design
  - Representative sample
  - Questions aren't "leading" or biased

*Note: Can't bypass requirement and have another agency or sponsor do the survey/poll*



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# PROJECT WEB PAGES

- District policies may vary
- Can be on the Corps or Sponsor's site
- Continually focus on the web page's purpose and good design tips at <http://www.usability.gov/>



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# WEB PAGE EXAMPLES

- Everglades - Joint Corps and Sponsor

<http://www.evergladesplan.org>

- Natomis – Levee Certification

<http://www.spk.usace.army.mil/projects/civil/natomascertification/index.html>

- Information Repository: Planning Guidance

<http://www.spd.usace.army.mil/cwpm/public/plan/pdguide/guide.htm>



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# **(Last) Case Study Team Exercise: Communication Plan Implementation**

Capture the major...

1. Issues
2. Stakeholders and Interests
3. Information Needed To/From
4. Recommended Techniques
5. Tasks
6. Schedule
7. Cost



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# LUNCH BREAK



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# MEDIA TRAINING





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# MAXIMUM DISCLOSURE – MINIMUM DELAY



*“We need to tell the factual story – good or bad – before others seed the media with disinformation, as they most certainly will.”*

Donald Rumsfeld  
Former Secretary of Defense



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# MEDIA'S VIEW OF US

**Reactive**

**Too Slow**

**Bureaucratic**

**Inaccessible**

**Biased**





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# POP QUIZ

## True or False?

- |  |        |
|--|--------|
| Reporters are out to get you?                      | False! |
| Reporters seek controversy?                        | True!  |
| Reporters love sensationalism?                     | False! |
| TV reporters oversimplify?                         | True!  |
| Reporters use editing tricks to make you look bad? | False! |
| Reporters will let you ramble?                     | True!  |



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# MEDIA TRAINING

*“Who has  
questions  
for my  
answers?”*

- Henry Kissinger





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# PREPARATION

*“Everything you bring to the interview will be better than *anything* you make up after you hear the questions.”*

## Consider:

- Points you want to make
- Topics you want to cover
- Information for the record
- Anecdotes/illustrations



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# MEDIA TRAINING

*You Are the Message!*

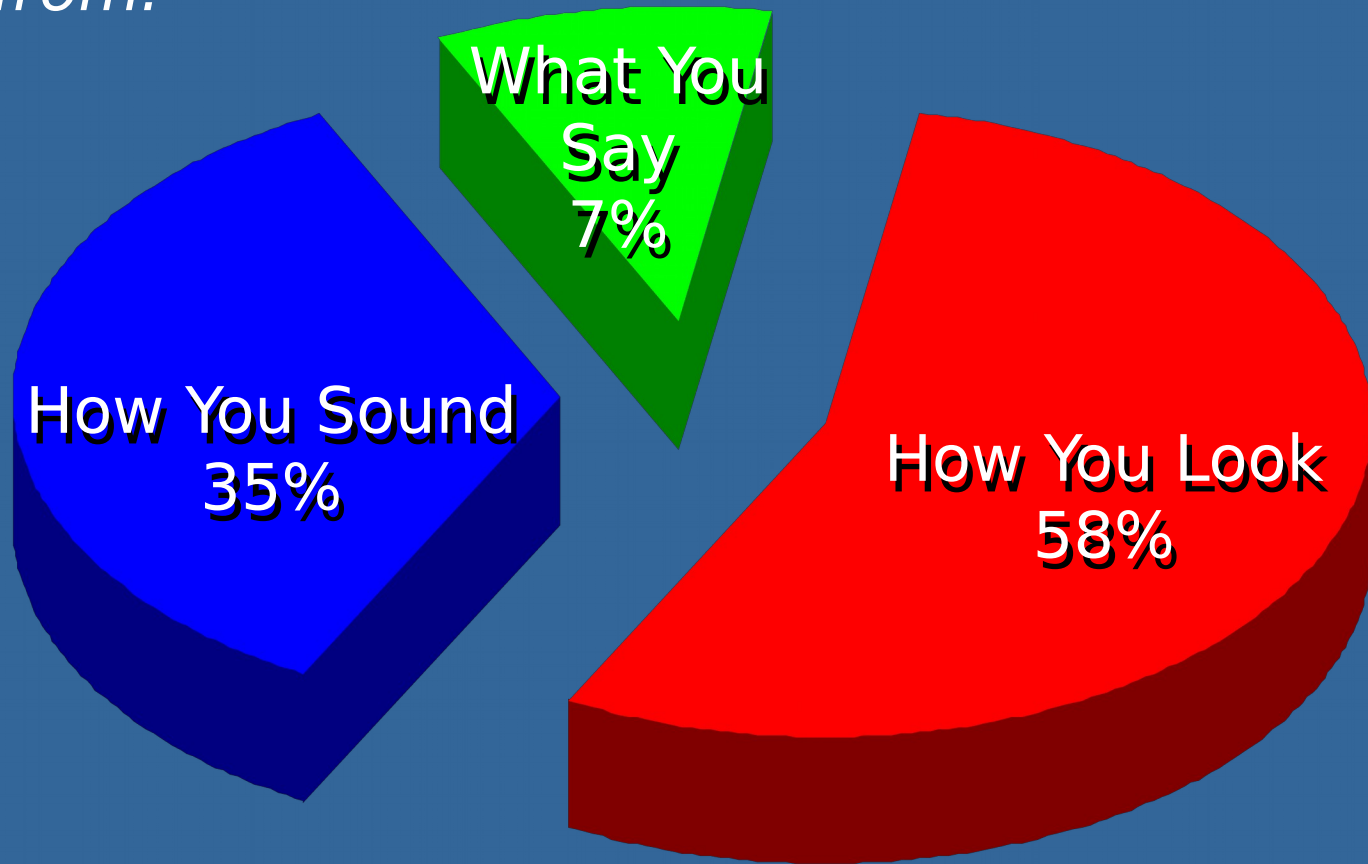
Facts provide information;  
*emotions and energy*  
provide interpretation.



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# PERCEPTION IS REALITY

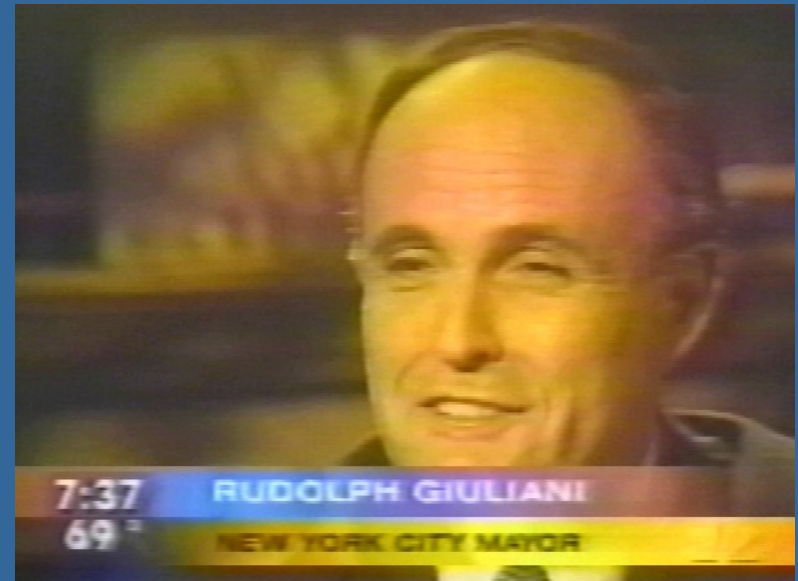
*Television audiences arrive at a conclusion about you from:*





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# WHAT YOU SAY vs. HOW YOU SAY IT





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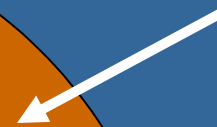
# CREDIBILITY?

**Higher  
concern**



*Empathy*

**Lower  
concern**



*Competence*

**Credibility  
Transference?**

**Non-  
verbals**

*Dedication &  
Commitment*

*Openness &  
Honesty*

**Emotion**

**Behaviors**

**Energy**



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# KNOW YOUR KEY MESSAGES







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# KEY MESSAGES

*Single, overriding communications objective*

Consider:

“Our first priority is to protect people and property...”

“We have to be good stewards of our taxpayer’s dollars...”

“We seek to balance human development with environmental sustainability..”



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# SOLDIER SAFETY

## Core Message

- Army leadership provides Soldiers every opportunity to succeed

## Supporting Messages

- Lessons learned in OIF/OEF
- Up-armored HUMVEES
- Body armor supply
- Body armor in basic training



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# SOLDIER SAFETY

The message comes alive!





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# MEDIA TRAINING

*Which would you remember?*

“Federal funding is simply not coming fast enough.”

OR

“The State gets its money by Federal Express,  
while we get ours by Pony Express.”



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# YOU'RE IN CONTROL!



*"The questions don't do the  
damage.  
Only the answers do."*

- Sam Donaldson



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# INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

*Bridging – no matter the interviewer's question, bring it back to your key message*

Consider:

“Yes, we’re concerned about that, but here’s how we plan to address it...”

“I’m not familiar with that, but what I do know is...”

“...and another thing I should point out is...”



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# INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

*Flagging – alert the interviewer that what you’re about to say is important*

Consider:

“What’s important to remember is... ”

“I want to make sure you understand that... ”

“Let me put that into perspective... ”



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# INTERVIEW TECHNIQUES

*Hooking – end your answer in a way that prompts a question you would like asked*

Consider:

“I believe these new measures will work...”

“We’re excited by the results of the study...”

“There are some important conclusions made from the research...”





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# INTERVIEW BASICS

- Good communicators are good listeners
- Relate answers to audience
- Speak plainly and conversationally
- Buy time – engage brain before speaking
- Listen for negatives – don't repeat them
- Never assume understanding – educate
- Never criticize other agencies



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# INTERVIEW BASICS

- Eye contact – conveys confidence
- Hands – illustrate with small gestures
- Stand best – sit forward
- Facial expressions – tell a story
- Control – check emotions/stay calm
- Fumble - start sentence over
- KISS – “keep it short and simple”



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# MEDIA TRAINING

*Questions?*





# MOCK PUBLIC MEETING

1. Based on stakeholders interests and the key messages you've developed
  - What is the most difficult question you expect to receive?
  - Respond using the Six-Step Communication Model
2. TAPED INTERVIEWS – EACH TEAM
3. Feedback